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Inside Information

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INSIDE THIS "INSIDE"

Page

Acting USDA deputy director for publishing, visual communications named.....1
PR founder, 92 years young, goes to Washington, D.C., to conduct seminar.....1
ACE and ACT officers listed for those who need or are interested.....2
Soil Conservation Service has information job opening in Indiana.....2
Highlights of national government communicators' conference reported.....3
Second national conference on small computers in government planned.....3
New "farm computer guide" available from publishers of farm magazine.....4
National forum held on electronic office workstations in the home.....4
USDA interviewing vendors for electronic dissemination of information.....4

NEW USDA DEPUTY INFO DIRECTOR NAMED

Nelson Fitton has been named acting deputy director for publishing and visual communications in USDA's Office of Information.

Fitton, who had been chief of OI's Publishing Division for a number of years, succeeds Claude Gifford who recently was appointed USDA's director of information.

Fitton has been with USDA for 23 years. He also heads the Department of Editing for the USDA Graduate School.

He's served as president of the National Association of Government Communicators, chairman of the Washington Region of Agricultural Communicators in Education and chairman of the Washington Chapter of the Society for Technical Communication.

Fitton was selected recently by the U.S. Office of Management & Budget to chair an interagency task force on the revision of OMB Circular A-3, the regulations and guidelines on the use of federal funds for publishing journals, magazines, periodicals and similar publications.

Four OI divisions report through the deputy director for publishing and visual communications: Design, Photography, Publishing and Video & Film.

The other three OI divisions--News, Radio & Television and Special Programs--report through the acting deputy director for current information, Stan Prochaska.

PR FOUNDER TO OFFER CURRENT PERSPECTIVES

Edward L. Bernays, living father of the public relations counsel profession, will turn 92 on Nov. 22, and will be in Washington, D.C., two weeks later (Dec. 5-6) to lead a seminar on "Perspectives on Current Public Relations Practices."

Advisor to presidents from Calvin Coolidge through Dwight Eisenhower, he last served the U.S. government as a consultant to the Departments of Commerce and State in the late 1970s.

For further information or registration for the Bernays seminar, write to the Professional Development Institute, Pace University, 331 Madison Avenue, Room 603, New York, NY 10017, or call (212) 490-3895.

AG COMMUNICATORS GROUPS' OFFICERS LISTED

Newly elected officers for the Communication Officers of State Departments of Agriculture were recently reported in "Inside Information" (Oct. 24 issue).

Readers of "Inside" probably should know who the officers are of two other national agricultural communicators organizations, Agricultural Communicators in Education and Agricultural Communicators of Tomorrow.

ACE officers are: President -- JoAnn Pierce, University of Florida; President-elect -- Larry Quinn, USDA's Office of Information; Vice President -- Patricia Loudon, USDA's Extension Service; Secretary-Treasurer and National Office Coordinator -- Hal Taylor; and Immediate Past President, Ralph Ballew, Mississippi State University.

ACE board of directors include: Northeast Region -- William Folwell, Pennsylvania State University; Southern Region -- Randall Cofer, University of Georgia; North Central Region -- John Sperbeck, University of Minnesota; Western Region -- David Mathis, University of Nevada; DC Region -- William Carnahan, USDA's Extension Service; Associate Members -- James Webster, Webster Communications (Virginia); and Life/Retired Members -- James Chapman, Ohio.

ACT officers are: President -- Jeff Stevenson, Michigan State University; Vice President -- Paul Jackson, Oklahoma State University; Secretary-Treasurer -- Ann Hastings, University of Illinois; and Editor -- Deborah Sauerhage, Southern Illinois University.

In addition to the national officers and board members of ACE, the DC Region selects regional officers to conduct the annual public affairs workshop and monthly activities.

The DC Region ACE officers are: President -- Judith Bowers, USDA's Extension Service; Vice President -- Jean Rawson, USDA's Agricultural Research Service; Secretary -- Wayne Baggett, USDA's Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service; and Treasurer -- Russell Forte, USDA's Office of Information.

SCS INFORMATION JOB OPEN IN INDIANA

Applications are being accepted through Nov. 18 for a public affairs specialist with USDA's Soil Conservation Service at Indianapolis, Ind.

Applications from outside SCS will be considered if less than three best qualified candidates from within SCS are available.

The person selected for the GS-12 level information position will maintain working relationships with various segments of the public, news media and officials of other federal and state agencies, groups and organizations.

Incumbent will prepare news releases and feature articles for statewide distribution, and will provide training and technical assistance to Indiana SCS personnel in the development and execution of effective information activity.

Applications must be submitted by end of day Nov. 18 to the Chief, Employment Branch, Soil Conservation Service, P.O. Box 2890, Washington, DC 20013.

OMB REQUESTS USDA PUBLICATIONS

The U.S. Office of Management & Budget has requested a copy of every USDA publication that has been eliminated or consolidated since April 20, 1981.

All USDA agencies were asked to send their examples to USDA's Office of Information, which assembled the package for transmittal to OMB.

NAGC EXPLORED REALITIES OF COMMUNICATION

The theme of the National Association of Government Communicators' annual conference held in Washington, D.C., Nov. 3-4 was "Living with Realities--The Public's Right to Know and the Government's Responsibility to Provide" or "Are We Really Doing Our Job?"

Several workshop sessions took a look at the increasing demands being placed upon government communicators at a time when communications technology is outpacing the ability to keep up, when communications skills are being tested, and when communicators are facing tightened budgets, limited personnel resources, new regulatory restraints and even personal criticism.

In addition to the opening general session, two general luncheon sessions and one general banquet session, the two-day conference was divided into workshops within four major tracks: Management and professionalism, publications management, broadcasting and speech writing.

Danford Sawyer, Jr., public printer and director of the U.S. Government Printing Office, addressed the conference.

One of Sawyer's goals is to establish a central electronic information bank that will allow people to walk into any library and access via computer any published government document. He said the GPO will become the central agency for electronic distribution of information for the federal government in the "Information Age."

Steven Dornfield, president of the national Society of Professional Journalists, also addressed the conference. He expressed concern about a trend that he sees which is restricting the flow of information from the federal government to the news media and public in general.

Those attending from USDA reported the NAGC conference had some of the best professional development sessions they have seen in recent years.

SMALL COMPUTERS IN GOVERNMENT CONFERENCE

The second national conference on small computers in government--advanced technology to serve the public--will be held Dec. 14-16 in Washington, D.C.

The 3-day conference will begin with a keynote panel discussion of the future of microcomputers.

Panel leader will be Robert Myers, senior editor of GOVERNMENT COMPUTER NEWS.

Panel members will be: Stewart Alsop II, editor of INFOWORLD (newsweekly for microcomputer users); Terry Catchpole, editor-in-chief of BUSINESS COMPUTER SYSTEMS; Richard Friedman, managing editor of POPULAR COMPUTING; and Hellena Smedja, editor-in-chief of SMALL SYSTEMS WORLD.

Three concurrent sessions--management and procurement of microcomputers, microcomputer hardware and microcomputer software--will be held for one day.

A post conference workshop will feature four full-day concurrent sessions on microcomputer hardware selection criteria, microcomputer software selection criteria, microcomputer implementation in federal agencies and managing microcomputers in federal agencies.

The conference, sponsored by the Public Management Institute of George Mason University of Virginia, will be held at the Shoreman Hotel.

Registration fee is \$395 for the conference, \$225 for the post conference workshop or \$545 for the conference and workshop.

To register, call (301) 445-4400 or write to USPDI, Small Computers in Government, Dept. A B, 1805 Powder Mill Road, Silver Spring, MD 20903.

FARM COMPUTER GUIDE NOW AVAILABLE

"Farm Computer Guide" is the title of a new 40-page glossy 2-color publication from the publishers of SUCCESSFUL FARMING magazine.

The book was edited by Gary Vincent, editor of FARM COMPUTER NEWS newsletter published by the agricultural magazine.

The contents include such topics as "Computers--The next 'tractor' of farm management," "The tractor won't run without an engine: Pick software before hardware," "Choosing a word processor," "The toughest question: What computer do I buy?" "Your next major source of information: Farm computer networks," "Learning a new language: Computer glossary" and 10 other equally informative chapters.

If you're interested in getting a copy of the FARM COMPUTER GUIDE, send \$3.95 to Gary Vincent, Editor, Farm Computer News, Successful Farming, 1716 Locust Street, Des Moines, IA 50336.

And, if you're interested in subscribing to the FARM COMPUTER NEWS, send \$40 to Vincent.

FORUM HELD ON HOME WORKSTATIONS

As the nation moves rapidly into the era of "end user computing," with increased use of personal computers of all sizes and shapes, government and business will be faced with questions concerning the viability of doing official work at home.

Some USDA agencies have already had some limited experience with this approach, although it has mostly been informal and unofficial.

According to some analysts, today's 15,000 electronic home work stations in the private and public sectors could swell to 10 million by 1990--only 6 years away!

To discuss this new challenge, the National Academy of Sciences held a forum on office workstations in the home Nov. 9-10.

Corporate, government, union and university experts discussed how today's microcomputer technology is taking the computer from the central data banks of corporations and government to home offices, possibly revolutionizing the way America works.

They said it is a phenomenon with profound technical, economic, social, psychological and legal implications for working America.

ELECTRONIC VENDORS MEETING WITH USDA

A number of electronic computing firms are meeting with USDA officials to discuss the department's recently published "request for information" concerning plans to establish a central system for electronic dissemination of information.

The plan calls for selecting a successful vendor by mid-1984 who will provide computerized services for USDA to disseminate news and other perishable information to the public.

Two levels of electronic services are planned: One for high-speed delivery (4800 and 9600 baud) to newswires, electronic information services and others who want fast delivery of large amounts of USDA information; the other level for low-speed users (300 and 1200 baud), mostly within USDA, its agencies, land grant universities and state departments of agriculture.
